

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT

Town Digital Hub

social prescribing Web platform
helping public sector and CVS work
together to improve local wellness



PROJECT LEAD

Keith Harrison-Broninski

"Town Digital Hub takes a uniquely holistic approach to social prescribing."

*Dr Richard H. Kimberlee,
South West Lead, Social Prescribing Network*



Secure interactive website on the public Internet for people to create a personal wellness plan from community assets and give permission to view it to people/organisations, including volunteers, that support them.

Summary

Social prescribing schemes that are not fully holistic may recommend community assets such as coffee mornings and clubs for problems such as isolation, weight, and fitness although there are complex underlying causes that clients cannot redress unaided. Without addressing such causes, clients in the most need will continue to have poor quality of life and make extended use of public services.

Town Digital Hub enables a coordinated approach that includes ongoing support from professionals and volunteers.

A volunteer/professional link worker, advocate, or mentor helps the client make their wellness plan. A typical wellness plan includes a personal support network, community resources, and public services that together support the client in achieving personal goals for their life issues. The coach then provides support both face to face and through social media, to monitor the impact on their wellness of each aspect of the plan, change its contents as needed, and track their overall progress using standard self-assessment tools.

The client needs less and less support over time, learning to use the website from home/smartphone, taking full ownership of their wellness plan, and in many cases going on to coach others in wellness planning. They become part of a wellness ecosystem.

Challenge

People with multiple life issues (such as safety, addiction, finance, housing, and transport) struggle to manage their own wellness holistically without long term help, which may account for the high drop-out rate from social prescribing [1,2]. Social Return on Investment from an advocacy model of social prescribing is 3 times the maximum normally obtained [3].

Impact

Reduces strain on public resources – Fixes root causes of low wellness via community assets rather than targeting symptoms individually as they manifest to different public services organisations.

Builds wellness - Gives clients a means to take long-term control of their lifestyle, by helping them understand and learn to address personal issues holistically.

Tracks outcomes - Automatically captures the standard outcome data needed by publicly-funded providers, eliminating form-filling that clients perceive as unhelpful and reducing the admin burden for providers.

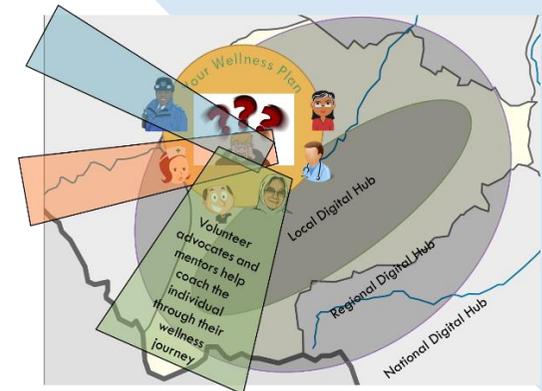
Supports community providers - Keeps provider details current on the Web by giving them an online platform for service delivery, thus reducing costs for providers, websites, and government organisations.

Allows volunteer link work, advocacy and mentoring - Enables former clients to support wellness planning by others, enabling the community support network to expand exponentially without added cost.

Develops assets - Allows investors into community infrastructure, such as councils, to understand which assets are delivering which forms of value to whom, enabling gaps and overlaps to be addressed.

Strengthens communities - Aligns multiple forms of community outreach to join up care, integrates initiatives in multiple cities/regions for economies of scale, uses wellness in community wealth building, and increases resilience by creating localised support networks.

YOUR SELF-ASSESSMENTS OVER TIME



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1. "Social prescribing: less rhetoric and more reality. A systematic review of the evidence", Liz Bickerdike, Alison Booth, Paul M Wilson, Kate Farley, Kath Wright", December 2016
2. "A review of the evidence assessing impact of social prescribing on healthcare demand and cost implications", Polley, M.J. and Pilkington, K., July 2017
3. "Society's return on investment – a proposed standard for measuring and unlocking the true value of health and care", Ernst & Young, December 2016

Key words: • Community • Self-Management • Social Prescribing • Volunteering • Long-Term Conditions • Patient Empowerment • Prevention